

CHAPTER 3

*F*ROM THE

B I S H O P S'

B I B L E

O F 1 5 6 8

TO THE

K I N G J A M E S

B I B L E

O F 1 6 1 1

E X P O S I N G

modern counterfeits, such as the
English Standard Version (ESV)
New International Version (NIV)
New King James Version (NKJV)
New American Standard Bible (NASB)
Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB)
Today's New International Version (TNIV)
and Easy-Reading King James Version (KJV-ER)

PURIFIED SEVEN TIMES:

From the Bishops' Bible
to the



KING JAMES BIBLE

RUBBING & POLISHING
WHEN
SUBSTANCE IS SOUND

Generally speaking, the early English Bibles are the same. The Bible had become “fixed” in the “ear” of the people, writes Professor Ward Allen.

“The changes in the text of the A.V. [KJV] from earlier Protestant translations are slight” (Ward Allen, *Translating For King James: Notes Made by a Translator of King James’s Bible*, Nashville, Tenn.: Vanderbilt University Press, 1969, pp. 16, 20).

“Most of the revisions” fall under the heading of “refinement,” he notes (Ward Allen, editor, *Translating the New Testament Epistle 1604-1611: A Manuscript from King James’s Westminster Company*, Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, Vanderbilt University Press, p. lix). The two **bold** words in the following typical passage are the only changes made by the KJV translators to this portion of the Bishops’ Bible.

“When they had heard these wordes, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way. The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him, Saying, Master, Moses sayd, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marrie his wife, and raise up seede unto his brother. **Now** there were with us seven brethren: and

the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. **And** last of all the woman died also. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall shee bee of the seven? for they all had her. Jesus answered and sayd unto them, Yee doe erre, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marrie, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.” Matt. 22

Most of the changes take the form of minor surface polishing applied to a firmly established, long standing structure. The King James translators wrote in their preface to the readers,

“...[W]hatsoever is sound already, (and **all is sound for substance** in one or other of our editions...the same will shine as gold more brightly, being rubbed and polished...” (cited in *Translating the New*, p. lx).

“[T]he furnace for gold” was a “furnace of earth” where the English Bible was “purified seven times.” The KJV is its seventh and final purification (Prov. 17:3, Ps. 12:6). It followed the six previous stages: Gothic, Anglo-Saxon, Pre-Wycliffe (Anglo-Norman), Tyndale-Coverdale-Great-Geneva, and Bishops’. Professor Allen writes,

“To the minds and ears of the translators the gold shown a bit brighter for this polishing...In their preface King James’s translators wrote that they were revising a good text and reviewing many good ones. Since they regarded the Bishops’ text...as a sound one, most of their revision consists in rubbing and polishing...” (*Translating The New*, pp. lx, lxi).

The Bible has three general elements which create meaning, sense and tone.

1. **Words and letters** (their connotations and sounds).
2. **Grammatical elements** (e.g. Would an idea be best expressed using a preposition, as in ‘the house of God’ or as a possessive adjective, ‘God’s house’?)
3. **Order** of words and grammatical elements.

Ward Allen notes that the KJV translators did *not* spend time “reforming sentences and giving shape to a series of sentences.” Their entire time was spent,

“...revising **words**, and those **scattered**. A study of those words will push aside the notion that the work was light. The translators were masters of Greek words, and they had an astonishing command of the full range of meaning for English words. Even more surprising is their sense for the current status of English words...When need arose they coined words...To the eye they appear easy and quick work. But the work was, as the translators said in the preface, ‘labour’” (Ward S. Allen and Edward C. Jacobs, *The Coming of the King James Gospels*, Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1995, p. 48, et al.).

The KJV translators generally followed the grammatical elements and word order (syntax) of the Bishops’ Bible. This was their foundation and they seldom varied from it. The changes they did make were *small* changes involving words or phrases. These changed words were usually not original, but were taken from earlier English Bibles, such as the Tyndale, Coverdale, Geneva, and the Great Bible.

The following example from 1 Thes. 2:13 shows *one* of the few instances in which the KJV translators did slightly alter the word order of the Bishops' Bible. When they altered the word order, they generally were copying the word order of another early English Bible. In this example they followed the Geneva. On occasion they introduced words of their own. In the example below they introduced only *one* of their own words. (The dates shown are those of the printing cited, not necessarily the date of the first edition.)

Wycliffe 1395: Therfor we doon thankings to God with outen ceessyng. For whanne ye hadden take of vs the word of the heryng of God, ye token it not as the word of men, but as it is verili, the word of God, that worchith in you that han bileued.

Tyndale 1530-1534: For this cause thanke we God with out ceasyng because that when ye receaved of vs the worde wherwith God was preached ye receaved it not as the worde of man: but even as it was in dede the worde of God which worketh in you that beleve.

Coverdale 1535: For this cause thanke we God without ceassyng, because that when ye receaved of vs the worde of the preachinge of God, ye receaved it not as the worde of men, but (eue as it is of a trueth) the worde of God, which worketh in you that beleue.

Great Bible 1540: For this cause thake we God also without ceassyng, because that when ye receaved of vs the worde (wherwith ye learned to know God) ye receaved it not as the worde of

man: but euen as it was in dede, the worde of God, whych worketh also in you that beleue.

Mathews 1549: For thys cause thanke we God wythout ceasyng, because that when ye receiued of vs the word, wher with God was preached, ye receiued it not as the worde of man: but euen as it was in dede, the worde of God: whiche worketh in you that beleue.

Bishops' 1568: For this cause thanke we God also without ceassyng, because ye receauyng the worde which ye hearde of vs concerning God, ye receiued it not as the worde of man, (but as it is in dede) the worde of God, which effectuously worketh also in you that beleue.

Geneva 1599: For this cause also thanke wee God without ceasing, that when yee receiued the word of God, which yee heard of vs, yee receiued it not as the worde of men, but as it is in dede the word of God, which also worketh in you that beleue.

King James Bible 1611: For this cause also thanke wee God without ceasing, because [Tyndale] [KJV] when yee receiued [Tyndale] the word of God, which yee heard of vs, yee receiued it not as the word of men, but (as it is in [Geneva] trueth), [Coverdale] the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that beleue [Bishops'].

This author's *word for word* collation of the changes in the Bishops' New Testament, made by the King James Bible translators, indicates that these changes were made to accomplish the following:

1. Make the Bible even *more* memorizable and singable. The KJV translators accomplished this by taking advantage of our broad English vocabulary to produce a text characterized by even more:
 - Meter
 - Alliteration
 - Brevity
2. Ensure continuity and cohesiveness (sounds like 'adhesive'; make thoughts stick together) through the use of repeated sounds, letters, and words.
3. Give the Bible a vocabulary which clearly distinguishes it from the voice of man.
4. Ensure that the Greek and Hebrew texts were transparently shown so that outside reference books were not needed.

These observations result from this author's *thorough* collation of the Bishops' and previous Bibles. It is a conclusion based on facts which are demonstrable and not based on supposition. It is often assumed that the KJV was one of a series of English Bibles, each one updating a more primitive or earlier type of English. Somehow we have wrongly integrated the progressive history of the English language (Early English → Middle English → Late English) with

the names publicly associated with the printed English Bible (Tyndale → Coverdale → Great Bible → Bishops' → KJV).

Although there are some elements of overlap between the changes in the English language and the respective Bibles of those periods, we cannot assume, as most have, who have not actually collated them word-for-word, that the language of the KJV reflects *updating* of the language of the Bishops' and earlier Bibles. This false impression has arisen because the spelling and Gothic type font of these earlier Bibles make them *appear* unreadable and 'difficult.' They were not!

On the contrary, the evidence proves that the **Bishops'** and earlier Bibles had a pedestrian, that is, a **very easy and common vocabulary**. They actually had a simpler vocabulary than the KJV. Seeing is believing. The charts documenting this are at the end of the chapter entitled, "The Holiest of All: Separate From Sinners...Pure Words." Only *rarely* does the KJV change an 'archaic' phrase, like the Bishops' 'forged cavillation' in Luke 19:8, to the easier 'false accusation,' or the Bishops' 'they wote not' to the KJV's 'they know not' in Luke 23:34.

Although early English Bibles had a simpler vocabulary than the KJV, they did not necessarily communicate God's word *better*. Nor do modern versions which *occasionally* use simpler vocabulary. God, who created the mind, knows the components of comprehension. He alone knows how he programmed the brain to receive and use information. He left a record of 'How the Mind Works' in his word. The upcoming chapters will explain and demonstrate how our God-designed mind ascribes meaning to words, sentences and paragraphs in his God-designed Bible. Secular researchers, like those at Stanford University, have already observed some of these phenomena and use them everyday to trick us into buying a certain brand of soap or cereal.

*W*hy does the KJV contain the words which it does? Why has God continued to use this Bible, in spite of hundreds of attempts to change it? This book demonstrates the following characteristics which distinguish the King James Bible from man-made modern counterfeits.

1. The KJV was the seventh polishing of the English Bible, made unique among all English Bibles because it was and still is the only one whose translators invited the input of *all* interested English-speaking Christians *before* it was published (Ps. 12:6). It was not done by just one man, nor was it done by a paid committee of ‘scholars.’

2. The KJV is the only English Bible which enhances meaning and memorization with careful and pointed synchronization of the following:

- ☑ Letter Sounds
- ☑ Syllabication
- ☑ Words, Parts of Speech, and Word Order

3. Like Jesus Christ, the living Word, the KJV is:

“holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher...” Heb. 7:26

It is the only English Bible which retains a “pure language” (Zeph. 3:9) which identifies it as the voice of Jesus Christ, the living Word, who is also “separate from sinners” (Heb. 7:26). It perfectly balances this *special vocabulary* with a unique brevity, affording easy memorization. This one example of the superiority of the KJV Bible will be followed by thousands of others in this book.

- ☑ The NIV, TNIV, ESV, and NASB, in Romans 10:15, use the words “good news”

in place of the KJV’s word “gospel.” Their wordy *two* word, *eight*-letter substitute can apply to *any* ‘good news,’ such as winning a basketball game or getting a tax refund. The concise KJV word ‘gospel’ can only apply to the Bible. The KJV took the Bishops’ Bible’s phrase ‘good tidings’ and changed it to “gospel.” It is *shorter* than “good tidings” and therefore easier to memorize. ‘Gospel’ is a *Holy* Bible word — not a word heard on the ‘news.’

These assertions are thoroughly documented in this book’s pages and chapters. Examining each word “brings home the wonder of the finished work,” writes Ward Allen (*Translating the New*, p. lxxxiv).

God permanently replaced the early English Bibles
with the MAJESTIC
KING JAMES
BIBLE.

